Manik Chandra Saha

People's Movement Against Shrimp Farming in Bangladesh

MOVEMENT OF HARINKHOLA

It was November 13 in 1990. A mammoth gathering of ten thousand agitated mob of both male and female, led by Khushi Kabir, assembled at Bigordana to protest against the death of Karunamoyee. It also demanded the justice of her murder. The armed police tried utmost to disperse this mammoth gathering. Later amidst thousands of struggling poor people, Khushi Kabir firmly declared, 'We must go to Harinkhola. The valiant lady Karunamoyee has become a martyr there. So we shall have to march there'. A long procession moved ahead uninterruptedly covering three kilometers with chanting slogans and reached the historic place of Harinkhola. Khushi Kabir, the chief co-ordinator of a voluntary organization *Nijera Kori* laid the foundation stone of the monument in memory of Karunamoyee, the valiant martyr of Harinkhola movement. In a solemn ambience, she declared that every year on November 7 people would gather in this sacred place to pay homage to Karunamoyee. They also took oath to resist shrimp cultivation in that locality.

Harinkhola, a remote village of Khulna lies at Deluti under Paikgacha Upazilla. With the financial aid of Delta Development Project polder No. 22 has been set up in this area. A high embankment has been erected here covering the entire polder to prevent saline water. The project aims at social upliftment of the local people through agricultural development. A 17 km. long embankment has saved polder No. 22 from saline water. Nearly eleven thousand cultivable lands cover the area where more than ten thousand people live.

One Wazed Ali Biswas, a controversial business figure of Khulna town, selected this prohibited area to set up his 30th shrimp enclosure. To materialize his scheme, he took the consent of only the owners of 600 bighas out of two thousand bighas. He left no stone unturned to push

saline water in polder No. 22 through the neighbouring Harinkhola beel. As a result, people of all walks of life including landless ones, middle class farmers, Chairmen of Union Parishads, DDP project official reacted violently and they began to mobilize people against shrimp cultivation. Despite knowing everything, a few solvent and some wicked people helped Wazed Ali Biswas to fulfil his dream. A sort of revenge and class struggle instigated them to do so. Under the worthy management of 14 female organizations, 14 landless organizations mobilized all the male and female people of this locality. The members of these organizations took over the authority of 176 acres of land on lease and began to earn money through co-operative activities. It brought about a change in the field of power and influence at the polder. At this the land owners got angry with the landless organizations. Wazed Ali exploited the opportunity and he befriended with them. In this circumstance, on November 6, 1990 midnight Wazed Ali along with his gang of hooligans rushed to polder No. 22 by five trawlers and built some watching hut. He even dug some bunkers to protect the probable attack of the local people. The local people came to catch fish at day break as their usual course but they were interrupted by the hooligans of Wazed Ali. The news spread fast. On November 7 at 9 a.m. the local people decided to bring out a protest procession. They also decided that they would go to Harinkhola and ask Wazed Ali how and on what basis he wanted to make a *gher*. According to the decision, around 9 a.m. thousands of people comprising both male and female of Bigordana approached towards the embankment to make a protest rally. On the other hand the agitated people began to approach from the other side also. When the procession came closer, the hooligans suddenly attacked the unarmed village people. Disregarding the attack, the landless women of the front part of the procession boldly advanced ahead. Then the hooligans began to blast bombs. As a result, Karunamoyee Sarder the valiant leader of the landless people fell down on the ground with her blood smeared body. Her deadbody was torn into pieces. At the same time, Rupban Bibi, Rahima, Koushalla, Sima, Rahela, Urmila, Haripada and Noor Ali Gazi were injured and they were admitted into different clinics of Khulna city. The hooligans of Wazed Ali not only used guns and bombs, but also matchette, iron rod, stick and other sharp weapons. Finding the situation unfavourable, they left the spot carrying along with them the deadbody of Karunamoyee and the wounded Rupban Bibi. They thought like Karunamoyee Rupban also died. But as she was alive, they threw her on the shore of the river at night.

On November 8 early in the morning, people discovered her lying half-dead and admitted her into a clinic of Khulna. Later even she was

arrested because of her participation in the procession. The police of Paikgacha thana visited the spot one hour after the massacre was over. The whole situation was so tragic that the spot seemed to be a battlefield. Police was not far away from Harinkhola, but according to the local people, Wazed Ali purchased the police earlier. This is why they played a passive role. Later on police arrested ten villagers and seized two trawlers left by the hooligans of Wazed Ali.

November 7 was a government holiday. So naturally the administrative activities were almost dead. This is why Wazed Ali chose the day and took the advantages of his armed hooligans to try to occupy polder No. 22 of Harinkhola under Delta Development Project. Soon the news reached the concerned anthority of Paikgacha and Dhaka. Specially the Netherland Embassy, the central office of *Nijera Kori,* high police officials, journalists and politicians got very anxious about the attack. They reacted seriously. For this reason the DIG of Khulna range Mr. Shohudul Haque, other high officials, Dr. Subinoy Nandi, a socio-economic advisor to DDP, political leaders, journalist Manik Chandra Saha and some other journalists reached the spot on November 8. Even that time the very embankment of Harinkhola seemed to be a battlefield. The used shell of bullets, bunker and innumerable traces of bomb blasts were still visible. The bloodspot of dead Karunamoyee and so many other wounded people looked fresh. Teeth and torn hair were found hanging on the branches of a nearby *Babla* tree. A heart breaking situation was created after the recovery of these things. On the other hand, a tense situation engulfed Harinkhola, Bigordana, Noai and the entire polder No. 22. Most of the people left home to escape arrest and harassment of the police. After the occurrence police was deployed there. But due to their partial role people could not believe them. Inspite of the assurance of security of the high police officials, the police of Paikgacha thana forced Ajit, the son of deceased Karunamoyee to put a signature on a blank white paper and filed a case with Paikgacha thana. In this case Wazed Ali and his fellow accused were excluded. After knowing it Ajit filed another case against Wazed Ali in the court. Later the police accepted the case as a fresh one. Instead of arresting the accused of the case, police began to harass innocent people of the village. Even the wounded ones, who were admitted into different clinics of Khulna, were deprived of proper treatment due to police harassment.

After the demise of Karunamoyee, people of Harinkhola were so much agitated against the illegal *gher* owner and their oppressive activities that as a result, various organizations held meetings, brought out

processions, submitted memoranda and arranged press conferences. Consequently people of Paikgacha and Khulna also held meetings. On November 9 to observe the situation in person, the first secretary of the Netherland Embassy J.C. Vandarlan came to visit Harinkhola. At that time the officials of DDP and the Deputy Commissioner of Khulna accompanied him. Keeping the importance of the matter in view Mr. Gaen, Ambassador of Netherland in Dhaka visited Harinkhola. He talked to the villagers. His visit played a positive role among the local people as well as the local administration. The newspapers published the news of his visit with topmost priority.

After the death of Karunamoyee the members of the landless organizations guided by *Nijera Kori* assembled themselves to expedite the movement. They worked dawn to dusk.

On November 13, a protest demonstration was arranged at Bigordana primary school premises to make the people of the polder confident and to stop police harassment. The demonstration demanded immediate arrest of the killers of Karunamoyee. In this demonstration, Khushi Kabir, coordinator of *Nijera Kori* spoke as chief guest. Among others Mohiuddin Ahmed, Rashiduzzaman, Advocate S.M. Yusuf, Somendra Nath Halder delivered speeches. Md. Barek Gazi presided over the meeting. In this protest demonstration, Khushi Kabir declared Wazed Ali a murderer who violated government rules and ignored public opinion. She also demanded the immediate arrest of Wazed Ali and his fellow murderers.

At the end of the protest demonstration Khushi Kabir led a mammoth gathering of thousands of people and reached Harinkhola from Bigordana crossing a distance of 3 km. There she laid the foundation stone in memory of the martyr Karunamoyee. A huge agitated crowd led by Khushi Kabir, ignoring a band of armed police barricade, moved ahead. They took oath to materialize the dream of Karunamoyee. Their endeavour made the local people emotional as well as inspired.

It was November 16 in 1990. They vowed to continue a combined movement to the last drop of their blood. Various political and socio-cultural bodies, under the banner of *Paikgacha Upazilla Annaya Protirodh Committee* (Unjust Action Prevention Committee) unitedly demanded arrest of Wazed Ali and his gang, the killers of Karunamoyee. They also demanded exemplary punishment of the killers. Besides, they expressed their voice against the illegal shrimp cultivation in the cultivable land.

On November 19, this organization arranged a huge protest meeting at the *Shaheed Minar* premises of Paikgacha. Among others, Advocate

Sohrab Ali Sana, Advocate S M Yusuf, Narayan Chandra Chanda of Awami League (AL), Sultan Ahmed and Sarwar Tarafder of Communist Party, Mominuddin Sarder and Kalu Saha of Communist League, Somendra Nath Halder, Chairman of Deluti Union Parisad, Madhab Roy, Shyamolie Bairagi and Tara Mia, central executive of *Nijera Kori* spoke in the meeting. Rashiduzzaman of Communist Party presided over the meeting. The meeting claimed judicial inquiry of the killing of Karunamoyee within ten days. At the end of the protest meeting a large demonstration went round the important roads and submitted a memorandum to the Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO).

Wazed Ali earned immense money through shrimp cultivation. He also enjoyed much influence under the banner of Jatio Party (JP). But his influence flopped after the fall of General Ershad through mass movement. As a result, Wazed Ali had to face pressure from different corners. For this reason, Khulna District Police arrested Wazed Ali as the murderer of Karunamoyee and sent him to the court. But being specially influenced Paikgacha Magistrate granted his bail prayer on Friday, December 14, even though the day was a weekly holiday.

Against this all the political parties reacted strongly. Later, on December 18 the Deputy Commissioner of Khulna withdrew Upazilla Magistrate Mansur Ali due to the protest movement of 8, 7 and 5 party alliances and all student fronts. Prior to this, all political leaders boycotted the programme of the victory day on December 16 as a protest of the bail of Wazed Ali.

On December 24 people of all walks of life of divisional city of Khulna gathered at Shaheed Hadis Park. The gathering aimed at making the news media and District Administration active against the cruel killing of Karunamoyee and mischievous activities of the *gher* owner and his paid hooligans in polder No. 22.

Thousands of people both male and female carried posters, festoons, placards and banners demanding the hanging of Wazed Ali and the stop of shrimp cultivation. They began to gather at Shaheed Hadis Park chanting slogans. Students, labourers, youths of the city and so many leaders and activists of different political parties joined them. Khulna city burst into chanted slogans. By 2 p.m. the park was brim-full. About fifteen thousand people assembled there. Most of them came from villages and they belonged to the havenots class. In fact, they were the real power of the anti-*gher* movement. In this huge gathering 8, 7 and 5 party alliances, United Communist League, all student fronts, combined cultural front, youth movement front, volunteer organization *Nijera Kori*

participated spontaneously and the gathering was really an exceptional one after the fall of Ershad, the then autocrat. Even Jatio Party Leaders who lost their power only 18 days back supported the anti Wazed Ali movement and demanded his arrest. Communist Leader Rashiduzzaman, the convenor of *Annaya Protirodh Committee* presided over the protest meeting in which Khushi Kabir, the chief of *Nijera Kori,* Prof. Sardar Abdur Razzaque and Advocate S.M. Yusuf of Awami League (AL), Nazrul Islam Manju of BNP, Sheikh Moniruzzaman and Advocate Firoz Ahmed of Communist Party, Azizul Islam of JSD, Ashrafuzzaman of NAP, Zillur Rahman of United Communist League, Ruhul Azim Rumi of combined cultural organization, Shymal Singha of youth front and Somendra Nath Halder, Chairman, Deluti Union Parisad addressed the meeting. In this gathering a proposal was taken in which the arrest of Wazed Ali, dismissal of SP Khulna, ASP Paikgacha circle and the immediate transfer of Divisional and Deputy Commissioners of Khulna were strongly demanded. AL leader Advocate Sohrab Ali Sana read out the proposal and the proposal was accepted with huge clappings by the people. Next day on December 25, ZI Talukder, SP of Khulna received a stand release order of transfer.

On December 14 SP Khulna accepted the chargesheet of Karunamoyee murder case. Perhaps he was earlier informed of his transfer. Besides he could not ignore anymore the political pressure and public opinion.

The charge was framed against accused Wazed Ali, the main murderer. Another 35 men were also included in the chargesheet. Paikgacha Upazilla court duly accepted the chargesheet.

Then Wazed Ali began to chalk out plans how he could get rid of the charge of murder. At last he became successful. He was able to influence the high police officials to transfer the case to CID. As it is known from the complain of Ajit, Wazed Ali managed the police by bribing them with huge money. The CID police brought the chargesheet back from Paikgacha court for further investigation. Thus the accused got rid of punishment for the time being.

The CID police began the investigation and after a few days the people could realize the fact that the investigation of CID was nothing but a bluff. It was merely a time killing ploy. By this time Wazed Ali joined BNP with the direct help of two high ranking leaders, though he was earlier beaten by the agitated activists of BNP at the circuit house in Khulna. His new political identity helped him a lot to influence the CID.

CID began to investigate the case but the complainant of the case complained against the investigation officer himself of conspiracy and

partiality. Despite this the CID made a chargesheet in 1994 sitting on the case for long three years. In this case 18 people were accused but Wazed Ali was excluded. It was completely an illegal chargesheet. According to the prevalent law, if a chargesheet is once submitted, it can never be changed even if the investigation is done for the second time, no accused can be excluded and none gets rid of the charge. Rather more accused may be included in that very chargesheet.

In support of this provision of law the learned magistrate of Paikgacha court took the chargesheet. He also took the previous one and ordered all the accused including Wazed Ali to appear before the court. He added in that order that in case of failure, their goods would be seized. The learned magistrate took proper as well as lawful action in spite of heavy administrative and political pressure. It was possible for his honesty. Besides, he was an upright justice and later he had to pay off much for his step. He was transferred from Paikgacha in two days after he had given the order. On the other hand, Wazed Ali challenged the order and filed a criminal case with ADM court, Khulna. Though the learned ADM is not entitled to administer this sort of case, he gave an ambiguous order illegally at the time of his transfer from Khulna.

The lawyers engaged by *Nijera Kori,* on behalf of the plaintiff, submitted a revision suit to the District Judge Court against the judgement. After that Wazed Ali adopted various devices to linger the hearing of the case. Besides he tried his best to transfer the case to the Additional District and Session Court. He did so only to find time. Later on August 18, 1996, the learned judge conferred the judgement in favour of the plaintiff. As a result, a warrant was issued against Wazed Ali. Wazed Ali put an appeal to the High Court against the judgement of Khulna Judge Court. The honourable judge postponed the order of the lower court. At present the case is waiting for hearing. On the other hand the case filed by the manager of Wazed Ali against 47 innocent villagers is going on. All these 47 accused are the leaders and activists of the anti-*gher* movement. This case was framed in two folds. Firstly, they were accused of killing one *gher* watchman and snatching away his dead body. Secondly they were blamed for bearing explosives. The accused have been released of the first complain but the other one is continuing. As a result, these 47 people of polder No. 22 have been suffering a lot as they have to appear before the court from a long distance of nearly 60 kilometers. The explosives case is still under trial.

Karunamoyee was murdered at broad daylight. But the judgement of this case has yet to come to light. Long seven years have passed but the

justice is yet to be delivered. Apart from conferring judgement, the accused of this case are yet to be traced. As a result, a sort of ambiguity is working among the family members of Karunamoyee as well as the people participated in the movement.

THE DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF KARUNAMOYEE OBSERVED

On November 7 in 1991 the first death anniversary of Karunamoyee was observed. In this occasion, Awami League, Communist Party and other political parties from different areas gathered at Harinkhola to pay respect to Karunamoyee. Later a huge gathering assembled at Bigordana school premises and chanted slogans. In this gathering Khushi Kabir spoke as the chief guest. Noor Ali, the valiant fighter of Harinkhola movement presided over the meeting. Advocate Shorab Ali Sana, Advocate S.M. Yousuf of Awami League, Sheikh Moniruzzaman and Advocate Firoz Ahmed of Communist Party, Azizur Rahman of Communist League and Advocate Biplob Kanti of BSD spoke in this gathering. A cultural organization comprising the landless members recited poems and sang songs. They also staged a drama on the tragic death of Karunamoyee.

November 7 has become a red letter day as well as a sacred day in the life of the people living in polder No. 22. The voluntary organization *Nijera Kori,* different political parties of Khulna and Dhaka and the leaders of different socio-cultural bodies observed the day with deep solemnity. The people involved in anti-*gher* movement observed the day in the same way. With the passage of time, the day is gaining its importance.

One can hardly believe how one can so easily be a part of thousands of people. One couldn't know oneself if one were not present at Harinkhola on the day of November 7. When the rising sun spreads its red rays around the horizon in the early morning, people make rows like ants and begin to gather to this very spot. They put floral wreaths on the altar of the monument of Karunamoyee. They discover their real identity on the altar of the monument. The trawlers float on the water of the river. Everybody feels an urge to reach Bigordana. The Bigordana Ghat assumes a charming look when hundreds of trawlers anchor there.

November 7 is not only a day of taking oath. But it has its own importance in many ways. The day seems to be a festival day for the local people. The shopkeepers behave pleasantly, the children run to and fro as if it is a great festival for them.

On the occasion of the death anniversary of Karunamoyee, Khushi

Kabir, Dr. Hamida Hossain of Law and Arbitration Center, Economist Anisur Rahman, social scientist Dr. Swapan Adnan, Dr. Subinoy Nandi, Advocate Sigma Huda, Dr. Babar N. Kabir, Mesbah Kamal, Shamsul Huda, Dr. Latifa Akand, Mafuzullah, Philiph Gain, Shishir Morol, Mohiuddin, Tara Mia and Professor Abu Bakar Siddique expressed their solidarity with the people involved in the movement.

FOUNDATION OF THE MONUMENT

On November 13, 1990 at the mammoth gathering at Bigordana school premises Khushi Kabir expressed her earnest desire to set up a monument of Karunamoyee so that she could be ever remembered. Poet Masud Bibagi gladly accepted the responsibility of making a design of the monument with the help of a Dhaka based architect. Karunamoyee died on the embankment of Harinkhola due to the bomb blast of the killers. On the eastern part of the embankment, a monument was built in memory of Karunamoyee. Masud Bibagi was keenly interested and selected Tanmoy, a student of Dhaka Art College and a few other artists to complete the task and they engraved a wonderful mural on the monument. The monument seems to be the symbol of the struggling people of Harinkhola movement.

PRESERVATION OF TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL SYSTEM

A traditional agricultural system of polder No. 22 has been preserved through the historical victory against shrimp *gher.*

Thousands of people of these fourteen villages under this polder have strengthened their agro-based economy. And now they are leading normal socio-economic life. They grow paddy, jute and many other vegetables in this polder which are rarely available in the surrounding areas.

PRESERVATION OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

This polder No. 22 is really a model when the coastal Upazillas of greater Khulna have been suffering the malice of the destruction of natural environment due to shrimp cultivation. The villages under this polder seem to be ever green. Different types of fruits, viz, mango, blackberry, coconut, jackfruit, date etc. are available here. Besides the Hindus use banana and mango leaves from this polder for various rituals. The farmers who cultivate shrimp go to the farmers of polder No. 22 for their cattles. Every month the farmers of this polder rear the cattle in

exchange of a certain amount of money. As a result, milk and ghee are cheaply sold here. Sometimes it so happens that a bottle of ghee is exchanged for a bottle of mustard oil. Besides polder No. 22 is used for the ground of sapling as the surrounding area is not suitable for the growth of sapling due to saline water.

INCREASE OF CONSCIOUSNESS ABOUT THE HARMFUL ASPECT OF SHRIMP CULTIVATION

Most of the farmers of polder No. 22 have now completely realized the harmful aspect of shrimp cultivation. Shrimp cultivation not only destroys soil but also pollutes environment. Besides it harms human body, socio-cultural life and influences the law and order situation.

PRESERVATION OF SOCIAL PEACE AND AMITY

The existing social peace and discipline of polder No. 22 is relatively better than that of surrounding areas. Because this polder area is free from the curse of shrimp cultivation. In the shrimp *gher* area the hooligans are always active to disturb the peaceful life of the village people. But the picture of polder No. 22 is quite different.

PRESERVATION OF LOCAL CULTURE

The rural culture of the southern part of Bangladesh has been prevailing here for ages. Still today the village farmers arrange cultural occasions for songs after their day-long work. They compose poems, songs and dramas in memory of Karunamoyee to pay homage to her sacrifice.

FAVOURABLE SITUATION FOR HEALTH AND EDUCATION

The people living in polder No. 22 are enjoying advantages in the field of health and education. As the polder is free from saline water, the people, specially the women and the children, do not suffer from skin diseases. The children of this polder have positively responded to primary and secondary education.

SPREAD OF IDENTITY OF A REMOTE PLACE

Harinkhola is certainly a remote place and the entire polder No. 22 is treated to be a remote area. People did not know this village. But today this village is well known to the people of both home and abroad. The

news media cover news of this polder. They also cover news of Karunamoyee. As a result, the village has got world-wide identity.

HARINKHOLA, A SACRED PLACE FOR ANTI SHRIMP CULTIVATION MOVEMENT

Karunamoyee is the source of inspiration in the field of anti-shrimp cultivation movement. People regard the monument of Karunamoyee as a sacred place.

HARINKHOLA, A MEETING PLACE OF THE STRUGGLING PEOPLE AGAINST *GHER*

People gather at Harinkhola from different parts of Khulna for anti-*gher* movement. A few have already laid down their lives. History has given Harinkhola a different status. Those who are fighting against the *gher* are inspired by the sacrifice of Karunamoyee. Her sacrifice not only inspires the local people but also people all over the country. At present this Harinkhola is a source of movement. This is why thousands of struggling people assemble here on November 7.

CAUSES OF SUCCESS

There are so many causes behind the successful movement of Harinkhola. The firm determination of the people of polder No. 22 is one of them. This anti-shrimp cultivation movement has become a symbol as well as the source of inspiration for the people of southern part of the country. Many factors have helped this movement to be successful. It should be impartially evaluated, to present the entire situation to the readers. So Harinkhola movement, its subsequent events, the importance and the role of the concerned body, should be focused properly.

STRONG UNITY OF THE LOCALLY ORGANIZED MALE AND FEMALE

Most of the people of fourteen villages under polder No. 22 were dead against the shrimp cultivation. Only a few ones supported Wazed Ali and wanted to implement his ill design regarding shrimp cultivation. But due to the pressure of the majority of people they couldn't do so. Thousands of people under the banner of 28 landless organizations played a vital role.

DELTA DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (DDP) AND THE ROLE OF THE NETHERLAND EMBASSY IN DHAKA

Polder No. 22 under DDP is financially aided by the Netherland government. Its object was to build up a strong embankment to better the socio-economic condition of the local people by preventing saline water. Guided by this object an agreement was signed between Bangladesh Government and the Netherland Government to stop shrimp cultivation.

On November 7, 1990, when an effort was made to dishonour this agreement, Dr. Subinoy Nandi, the socio-economic advisor to this project and team leader Mr. Derick Heart at once submitted a written complain to the Deputy Commissioner. Later the high officials of the Netherland Embassy in Dhaka visited the spot. They gave assurance to the people and played a positive role to communicate to the high officials of Bangladesh Government.

BACKING OF KHUSHI KABIR, THE CHIEF OF *NIJERA KORI*

A band of workers of *Nijera Kori* and Khushi Kabir herself have contributed a lot to expedite the movement and to uphold the victory of Harinkhola movement.

In fact, the struggling people of the area and this organization have come to a very close contact.

This organization is quite different than those of other NGOs. Because other NGOs follow only a routine task. On the other hand *Nijera Kori* seems to try to feel the pulse of the people of the grass root level and always back their movement.Thus it has achieved confidence of the people.

Nijera Kori has been monitoring the false cases filed against the innocent villagers by Wazed Ali and the murder case of Karunamoyee for long ten years.

The role of Khushi Kabir is worth mentioning. She left no stone unturned to establish the nobility of Karunamoyee. Some other philanthropists joined her. They are Jalaluddin, Abdus Sattar, Ferdous Hossain, Abdul Mazid, Swapan Roy, Fazlur Rahman, Matiur Rahman, Abul Khaer Monzu, Nilima Paul, Ayub Hossain and others.

BOLD ROLE OF *UNJUST ACTION PREVENTION COMMITTEE*

The unjust action prevention committee of Paikgacha played a bold role demanding the exemplary punishment of Wazed Ali. It also expanded

its hand of cooperation to the struggling people of the anti-*gher* movement. Awami League, BNP, Communist Party and some other political and social organizations are always sympathetic to the struggling people. As a result, the whole administration had to respond positively but Jatio Party and Jamat-e-Islami kept themselves aloof from the movement. Consequently the anti-*gher* movement of polder No. 22 enjoyed much political status. The activists of unjust action prevention committee exceeded its boundary from Paikgacha and reached up to Khulna. Their activities made others courageous enough.

SUPPORT OF POLITICAL PARTIES

The political parties excluding Jatio Party and Jamat-e-Islami expanded their assistance to Harinkhola movement. Communist Party and other left blocks were all along involved in this movement. The Khulna based leaders of Awami League and Communist Party were deeply involved to resist Wazed Ali. They expressed their solidarity with the movement. After the mass movement of 1990 they demanded the justice of the killing of Karunamoyee. They declared the direct support for the stop of the *gher* by Wazed Ali. At that time Wazed Ali was an activist of Jatio Party. So the leaders of other political parties got favourable situation to form an anti-Jatio Party and anti-Ershad sentiment among the common people. In this connection they did not face any ethical problem to support the movement.

CO-OPERATION OF THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Harinkhola and polder No. 22 lie far away from Paikgacha Upazilla Sadar. So the people of this area are not closely associated with the people of other localities. But when the anti-shrimp cultivation movement began, the people of neighbouring Dumuria, Batiaghata and Dakop, specially the havenots expressed their deepest solidarity with the people of Harinkhola. The sincerest co-operation of the neighbouring people increased their mental strength. They also even took part in the meetings and processions.

SOLIDARITY OF THE RENOWNED INTELLECTUALS AND SOCIAL WORKERS OF THE COUNTRY

The unprecedented rebellion of November 7 at polder No. 22 for the prevention of shrimp *gher* and the preservation of environment spreaded all over the country, specially the sacrifice of Karunamoyee, a poor landless woman. This incident moved the intellectuals immensely. That is why they come to visit Harinkhola to observe the death anniversary of

Karunamoyee. The mental strength of the local people seems to impress them much. The experience they gather from the spot and their feelings, got manifestation in their writings. Their invaluable solidarity gives the movement a noble shape.

ROLE OF NEWSMEN OF HOME AND ABROAD

After the tragic event of November 7 the reporters began to visit Harinkhola. The reputed reporters of the local, national and international dailies published the investigation report on the incident.

People of a particular area stopped shrimp cultivation. To do so they had to face challenges. But at length they snatched victory. But they are still struggling to hold the success of their movement. The reports focused on the importance of agro-based life have made the struggling people courageous. On the other hand Wazed Ali was defeated. He is ignored and hated by all peace loving people.

OVERALL INFLUENCE OF THE MASS MOVEMENT OF 90s

Wazed Ali, an alleged criminal of the society has made money through different illegal means. The then political atmosphere favoured him. But his evil design completely failed at Harinkhola.

The then government and the ruling party were liable for the massacre of Harinkhola on November 7. The hooligans of Wazed Ali were directly backed by the ruling party. But when the autocratic regime of General Ershad fell due to strong anti-autocracy movement of the people, they got frightened and the power of Wazed Ali disappeared. This political change also played a vital role to strengthen the victory of the movement of the people.

[উল্লিখিত শিরোনামে এই লেখাটি পুস্তিকাকারে ২০০০ সালে প্রকাশিত]